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Book Reviews.

The Death of Christ: Its Place and Interpretation in the New Testament. By PROFESSOR JAMES DENNEY, D.D., United Free Church College, Glasgow. Second Edition. New York: A. C. Armstrong & Sons, 1903. Pp. 324. \$1.50.

Professor Denney has given us in this book a work of first importance. In it he discusses the New Testament conception of the death of Jesus, as found respectively in the synoptic gospels, the early Christian teaching, the epistles of Paul, Hebrews and the Johannine writings; he then discusses the importance of the death of Christ in preaching and in theology. Professor Denney in his introduction has a few sharp words to say about what he regards to be an unhappy distinction between the historical and dogmatic, biblical and systematic, material and formal elements in the New Testament, and states very emphatically his thesis that in speaking of the death of Christ we cannot make any distinction between theology and religion. About this we naturally have our doubts.

The first main proposition which Professor Denney champions is that the death of Christ is central in the synoptic gospels, and that Jesus himself so regarded it. His method here is a good illustration how a clever conjecture may in the course of a few pages be treated as a datum on which to base argument. We can very well believe that Jesus foresaw from the beginning of his career that he would be killed as the prophets had been killed, but we find it difficult to see that Professor Denney has substantiated his fundamental position that in his baptism Jesus consciously numbered himself with the transgressors, "submitting to be baptized with their baptism, identifying himself with them in their relation to God as sinners, making all their responsibilities his own." It seems to us also that Professor Denney has likewise overemphasized the meaning of the *λύτρον* reference in Mark 10:45. It seems also, furthermore, a trifle strange to find him arguing that "St. Paul has sat at the feet of Jesus in this particular." There is at the bottom of this position an exceedingly important critical consideration. Is the saying actually one of Jesus or is it an evangelist's comment upon the career of Jesus? It is easy to see that this must be definitely settled before one can use the saying as expressing Jesus' own idea of himself. Professor Denney does discuss this matter briefly

on p. 39, but wholly from a dogmatic point of view. If it should appear that the use of the term "Son of man" is not restricted to Jesus himself, the position taken by Professor Denney would be considerably weakened.

At the same time we agree with Professor Denney that it is impossible to disassociate death from the messianic work of Jesus or from his conception of that work, and, further, that his death is central in the apostolic soteriology. It is in his development of the Pauline doctrine that Professor Denney's work is especially valuable. He very properly sees that "to become a curse for us" is exactly the same as to say Jesus died for us. It is with great satisfaction that we see that his interpretation of Paulinism does not make its system center about the incarnation. Nothing is farther from the Pauline thought than that, and the pages of Professor Denney's criticism in this connection are well worth reading by all those theologians who are endeavoring to find their own opinions in Paul. Paul's idea as to the death of Jesus is simply this: It was vicarious and enabled God to be just at the same time that he was justifying those who believed on Jesus. Professor Denney's discussion on this point is eminently satisfactory, except that he does not recognize, as distinctly as one could wish, that *δικαιοσύνη*, when referring to the believer, describes a state of nonliability to punishment rather than a state of actual moral righteousness. Had Professor Denney made a more careful word-study of this word and its cognates, we are inclined to feel his admirable discussion would have been still better. At the same time we cannot help feeling that his discussion of the propitiation idea tends to give it a larger importance than it actually possesses. Instead of propitiation, in any ordinary sense of the word, being the central thought of the New Testament teaching, it is one phase of the general teaching that Christ's death has a bearing upon the reconciliation of God and man.

It is not necessary to follow the argument of Professor Denney farther, but we wish to commend his book to all those who are actually interested in the New Testament doctrine. We are inclined to think that he has in a number of cases pushed certain phrases farther than the historical interpreter would quite have dared, and on every page of the book is evidence that its author is by temperament a dogmatic theologian. None the less the book is fundamentally sound in its exposition of the Pauline conception of the death of Jesus and is especially to be commended for its consistent refusal to allow pious reflection and rhetoric to do service as exegesis.

We cannot feel that any book written wholly on the death of Christ which does not make the messianic view of Paul consciously central can quite escape the danger of its treatment being somewhat lacking in perspective. The approach to all Paulinism is through the apostle's attributing messianic value to Jesus. His death, resurrection, ascension, his sending of the spirit, and his second coming are all more or less co-ordinately important elements of this general conception. Had Professor Denney come up to his work with less bias against the historical theologians — a bias which, we admit, has to some extent justification by the vagaries of a so-called rather than true historical method — he would have, in our estimation, made the book more an aid to a conservative reconstruction of Christian teaching. Until we abandon altogether the attitude of the apologete in our New Testament study, we shall fail to get at the New Testament thought with precision. What we need more than anything else just now is an actual presentation of the New Testament teaching exactly as it stands. Then, when we have once discovered what that teaching is, it will be time to defend or reject it.

S. M.

Criticism of the New Testament. [St. Margaret's Lectures, 1902.]
By PROFESSOR WILLIAM SANDAY, D.D., *et. al.* New York:
Charles Scribner's Sons, 1902. Pp. 230. \$1.80, *net*.

This volume contains six lectures dealing with the historical criticism of the New Testament. The subjects and writers are: (1) "The Criticism of the New Testament," by Professor William Sanday, D.D., University of Oxford; (2) "Manuscripts," by Dr. F. G. Kenyon, assistant keeper of manuscripts at the British Museum; (3) "The Ancient Versions of the New Testament," by Mr. F. C. Burkitt, University of Cambridge; (4) "The History of the Canon of the New Testament," by Professor F. H. Chase, D.D., University of Cambridge; (5) "The Dates of the New Testament Books," by Rev. A. C. Headlam, rector of Wellwyn; (6) "The Historical Value of the Acts of the Apostles," by Dean J. H. Bernard, D.D., Trinity College, Dublin. The essays thus brought together by leading scholars in Great Britain give a valuable, although somewhat fragmentary, view of the present status of scholarly opinion concerning the New Testament.

The purpose of the book is to promote general intelligence and thoughtfulness on the part of the multitude of Christian people who know little of what has been accomplished in the development of